Investigating Music Information Objects
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Introduction
This dissertation research is situated in the field of Music Information Retrieval, a subfield of Music Information Retrieval that focuses on the retrieval, organization, and management of music information. The research is driven by the need to better understand how musicians and other music practitioners comprehend, generate, and share music information in their practice. This dissertation examines the perceptions, characteristics, and music information objects (MIOs) of music practitioners, including the ways in which they understand and apply these concepts. It aims to provide insights into how music information scholarship can be developed to better support the needs of music practitioners.

Method
The research methodology involved a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. The study included a cross-cultural sampling of music practitioners from various backgrounds, including musicians, musicologists, and music information scientists. Data were collected through interviews and observations, which were then analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The study was conducted in partnership with the Music Information Retrieval (MIR) community, which provided valuable insights into the current state of music information practice and research.

Findings
5 Facets of Music Information Objects (MIOs): Demonstrates reflexive representation in context

Value
Socio-cultural value placed on music information objects. The Lakodi musicians and dance discussed experiential MIOs as having greater value than Symbolic or Interpretable MIOs for understanding the profound music practices.

Symbolic

Interpretable

Derivative

Ownership

Appropriateness

Secrecy
Issues that impede the sharing of information outside of specific, approved contexts for doing so.

- Non-acceptance of information-sharing outside of a hilltop (in Ugandan kingdoms politics).
- Secrecy within instrument-building apprenticeships (reflected in the instance of Les Paul making)
- Secrecy within Guru Ramdev (in Indian Carnatic and Hindustani traditions)
- Secrecy with religious music in Native American/traditions (like the Sundance)

Symbolic: "Conceptual MIOs" -
- Experiential Sub-Class: temporal, geographic, emotional aspects
- Descriptive Sub-Class: melodic, tonal, vocabulary
- Participatory Sub-Class: group creation, performer-audience boundary blurring

Derivative: "Conceptual MIOs" -
- Experiential Sub-Class: temporal, geographic, emotional aspects
- Descriptive Sub-Class: melodic, tonal, vocabulary
- Participatory Sub-Class: group creation, performer-audience boundary blurring

Interpretable: "Conceptual MIOs" -
- Experiential Sub-Class: temporal, geographic, emotional aspects
- Descriptive Sub-Class: melodic, tonal, vocabulary
- Participatory Sub-Class: group creation, performer-audience boundary blurring

Ownership: "Conceptual MIOs" -
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Appropriateness: "Conceptual MIOs" -
- Experiential Sub-Class: temporal, geographic, emotional aspects
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Secrecy Issues that impede the sharing of information outside of specific, approved contexts for doing so:
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Holding authority to make claims about aspects of the music, and being able to demonstrate these concepts, was to also show authority on musical practice (as information-context).

Temporal Epistemology
Ways of knowing and coming to know that vary over time, marked by narratives, metaphorical relationships, and stories that act as documents, providing evidence (Weissenberger, 2016). Responsible for varied artistic outputs (even of the "same" thing) over time.

Found in:
- Music practice contexts, teaching contexts, and in the ongoing process of self-discovery.
- Practices described temporal aspects to knowledge, and how salient conceptual elements (perhaps distant in time) are to immediate music-making activities.

References


Conclusions
Traditional music practitioners from 10 world traditions described their rich, socio-cultural understandings of music information within its disciplinary boundaries:
- Non-centralized, the notion of a "musical work" – Music Information Objects (MIOs)
- Discursively, the reflexive nature of representation in music and how MIOs reflect their own contexts
- Access to information is not always a positive, and this is not necessarily under the "gandboxing" umbrella.

Implications for (Library and) Information Science: The findings extend our understanding of music's complex realities and both theoretical and applied foundations for music information (and other non-textual information) within Information/Science.

Implications for Music Information Research:
As music information retrieval moves its disciplinary focus beyond purely content-based concepts and into the emerging area of content-based information retrieval, this shift in priorities necessitates the involvement of practitioners and further theoretical exploration in MIR. Music practitioners possess depth and breadth of expertise that could be used to inform music description, organization, and retrieval within systems.

- Music information objects (MIOs) are synonymous with their contexts; they reflect changing attitudes toward music information and knowledge within and across socio-cultural contexts.
- Music information – music fact-based and superficial when compared to music knowledge, which was seen as kind cultural profiency with demonstrable, applicable aspects.
- Understanding of the appropriate context for information is the way knowledge can be demonstrated, meaning music information research must seek to better understand those varied contexts of information.
- Music practitioners can be valuable resources for achieving this in future music information scholarship.

Acknowledgments
This research was funded in part by a Dissertation Research Grant from the Graduate School, Florida State University.